

URBANA TRAFFIC COMMISSION
Tuesday, March 1, 2005

MEMBERS PRESENT:

William Gray, City Engineer
Eddie Adair, Chief of Police

OTHERS PRESENT:

Shawn Crowley, Parking Enforcement
Jim Hayes, City Council Member
Laurel Prussing, 2106 Grange Drive

The meeting began at 4:06 p.m.

Additions to the agenda:

There were no additions to the agenda.

Approval of the minutes:

Eddie Adair moved to accept the minutes. Bill Gray seconded the motion. The Commission voted 2-0 to approve the minutes from December 2004 as read.

Item #1 - Discussion of visibility triangle configuration.

Bill Gray discussed the progress in developing visibility triangle specifications. He stated that Public Works staff has met to review different standards for determining visibility triangle guidelines. Some of the guidelines he mentioned were developed by the American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO) and contained modifications for urban transportation centers. Under the different guidelines, he added that the City might decide to use different points within the lanes of traffic and to use actual traffic speeds instead of posted vehicle speeds to determine visibility standards. Mr. Gray cautioned that new visibility standards might reduce parking and tree plantings that currently are permitted with our present standards.

Mr. Gray had no recommendation for the Commission at this point in time, but he wanted to brief the Commission on the progress of the development of new standards. He said that staff would be contacting other communities to obtain their guidelines.

Item #2 - Discussion of the installation of an intersection warning sign on Lincoln Avenue for Eads Street.

Mr. Hayes discussed concerns about visibility for motorists on Lincoln Avenue and Eads Street. He stated that southbound traffic on Lincoln Avenue had difficulty seeing the street name sign for Eads Street. He felt that people unfamiliar with the area might stop quickly to turn onto Eads Street, creating an unsafe situation for the motorists following behind. He said that there were three pine trees on the northwest corner of the intersection that blocked the street name signs. Mr. Hayes asked if a warning sign could be installed to warn motorists of the intersection.

In addition to blocking the view of the street name signs for southbound traffic on Lincoln Avenue, Mr. Hayes was concerned that those trees blocked the view of traffic for those traveling eastbound on Eads Street at Lincoln Avenue. He said that motorists on the west leg of the intersection could not see around those trees to see vehicles southbound on Lincoln Avenue. He asked if the City could trim the trees to improve visibility for motorists on Eads Street.

Mr. Gray stated that City would look at appropriate signage for the intersection. He added that the Engineering Division would check the visibility triangle and trim any growth that interfered with visibility at that intersection.

Mr. Gray asked that this item be placed on the April agenda to discuss the recommendations of staff.

Item #3 - Discussion of bus loading zone at Circle Academy on Division Street by Cunningham Children's Home.

Mike Lard from the Cunningham Children's Home requested a bus loading zone for the Circle Academy on Division Street. He said that there was a designated area for bus loading and unloading, but cars were parked there making it difficult for busses to drop off students.

Mr. Gray stated that City staff would look at the area and make recommendations regarding signage at the April Traffic Commission meeting.

Item #4 - Discussion of the installation of an intersection warning sign on Philo Road at Marc Trail.

Joe Smith requested the signage to warn motorists of the intersection of Marc Trail for those traveling south on Philo Road. He expressed concern that there was a slight rise in the road north of the intersection that might reduce the visibility for motorists heading south on Philo Road.

Bill Gray stated that City staff would look at the appropriate signage for the intersection and send their recommendations to the Traffic Commission for their April meeting.

Item #5 - Discussion of 2-hour parking restrictions on Birch Street north of Green Street.

Mr. Ernie Sullivan expressed concern about limited daytime parking for residents in this area. He asked that the Traffic Commission review the restrictions on Birch Street to determine if there were any alternatives that might help him.

Discussion followed regarding the type of purpose of the signage in the area. It was stated that the signage was for 2-hour parking from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. to reduce parking overflow from downtown employees.

Mr. Gray asked if the parking restrictions were in effect for Monday through Friday or for everyday.

Shawn Crowley stated that the restrictions on Birch Street were in effect daily but were currently enforced Monday through Friday. She added that there were no parking restrictions on Green Street, west of Birch Street and on McCullough Street.

Bill Gray said that he thought that there were rental spaces available in the area. He asked staff to contact the First Presbyterian Church to see if they allowed parking in the church lot on weekdays during daylight hours.

Ms. Crowley mentioned that the signage in that area had worn considerably.

Mr. Gray said that he would ask the Operations Division to look at the availability of replacement signage.

Chief Adair questioned whether the removal of the parking restrictions would solve the parking concern expressed by Mr. Sullivan.

Mr. Gray asked that this item be removed from further consideration unless other concerns were brought to the Commission's attention.

Subsequent information confirmed weekday free parking is available at the First Presbyterian Church. Ms. Stiehl contacted the Sullivan family and relayed the Commission meeting discussions.

Item #6 - Discussion of traffic concerns at Guardian Drive and Butzow Drive.

Mr. Don Gorbet expressed concern about visibility for westbound traffic on Butzow Drive at Guardian Drive. Mr. Gorbet stated that when vehicles were parked on the east side of Guardian Drive, north of Butzow Drive, he could not see southbound traffic coming out of the employee parking lot onto Guardian Drive.

Bill Gray recommended looking at the visibility triangle and to determine where to install “No Parking Here to Corner” signage at an appropriate distance for southbound traffic. He added that staff would determine whether parking restrictions were needed on the west side of the street. Mr. Gray said that he would discuss the issue of items placed at the end of the street with the Environmental Management Division to determine whether the items should be removed.

This item will be placed on the April Traffic Commission agenda.

Chief Adair presented the December and January STEP enforcement reports to the Traffic Commission (see attached). He suggested that staff conduct a speed study on Lincoln Avenue north of University Avenue to determine the appropriateness of the speed limits on Lincoln Avenue.

Meeting adjourned 4:52 p.m.

The next meeting will be on Tuesday, April 5, 2005 at 4:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara Stiehl
Recording Secretary